



THE OPRAH
MAGAZINE

Martha Beck's
**5 WILDLY
UNEXPECTED
WAYS TO
GET HAPPIER**

WEIGHT
BLOG IT OFF
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WILL THE REAL YOU PLEASE STAND UP!

How to know what you
actually want, think, love

**TOO TALL,
TOO SMALL,
TOO BIG
ALL OVER?**
6 women turn a "problem"
into a signature look

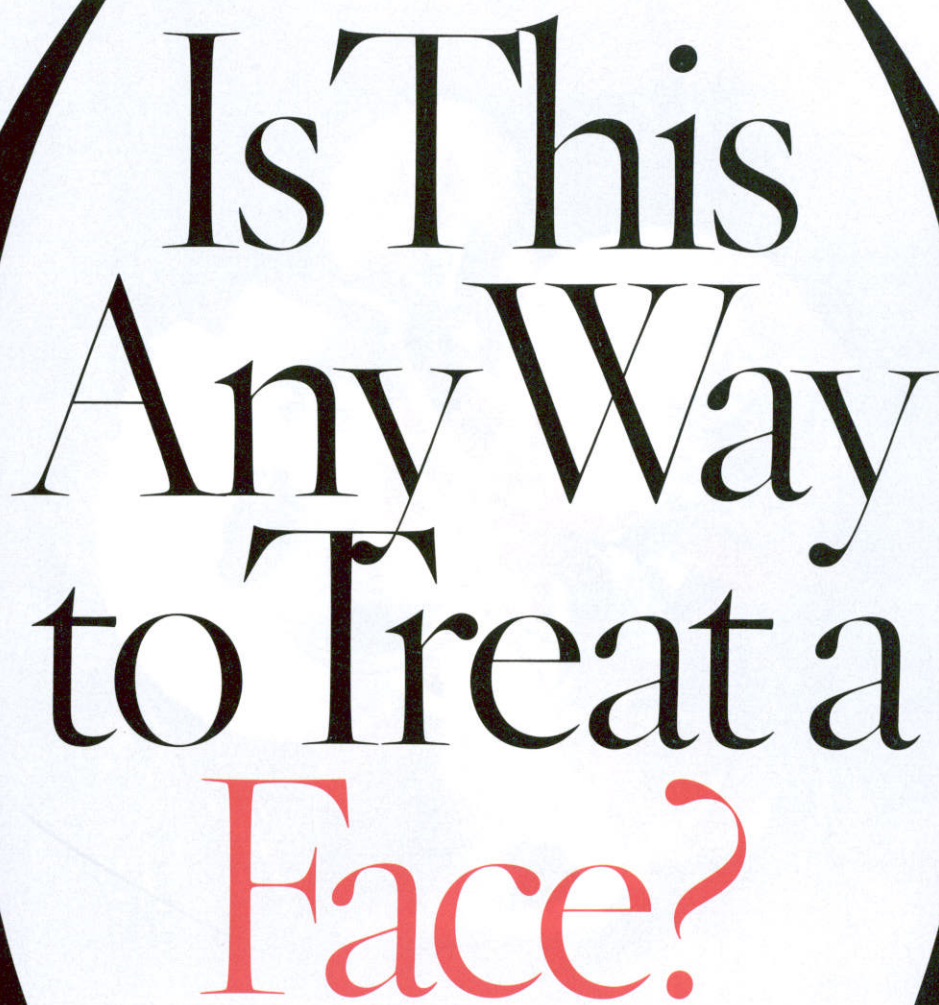
**OPRAH'S
SCHOOL
IN AFRICA**
The adventure
begins!

TRUST YOUR GUT

"It's never wrong!" —Oprah


SO, YOU WANT TO LOOK YOUNGER?

The lowdown on every possible nip, tuck & peel:
the price, the pain—what's worth it, what's not



Is This Any Way to Treat a Face?

BY JENNY BAILLY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX BEAUCHESNE



AN AWFUL LOT OF WOMEN—ON TV, ON THE STREET, IN the next office—are suddenly looking remarkably smooth-cheeked, uncannily fresh-faced, suspiciously rested. How did everyone (including certain people whom we know graduated six years ahead of us) get so young? The answer is that somewhere between throwing a few AHAs into your skincare routine and going for a total surgical overhaul, there's been an explosion

of not-quite-drastic treatments aimed at keeping the bloom on. But not so fast: All of them come with some sort of price—in pain, in scabs and bruises, and, of course, in dollars. Plus, the results won't last forever (none of these procedures have the power to stop time), so in a few months or years you'll be right back where you started. Are these procedures worth it? That's your call. We're just here to present the facts. ▶

Light and Heat... to smooth, improve color, and tighten

	What it does	How long it lasts	Pain-o-meter (1=light pinprick 5=agony)	Downtime	Average cost
FOR SMOOTHING Ablative Laser (CO ₂ or erbium:YAG)	Removes top layers of epidermis, eradicating serious sun damage (red and brown discoloration, fine lines) and even deep wrinkles.	If you're vigilant about sun protection and maintain a healthy lifestyle, results can last seven to ten years.	(5) General or twilight anesthesia required; prescription painkillers often necessary for a couple of days afterward.	After two-week period of oozing and crusting, skin can remain red for several months, says dermatologist Jeffrey Dover, MD.	\$5,000 and up.
Fractional Laser (brands include Fraxel and Harmony Pixel)	Removes microscopic portions of epidermis (less downtime than ablative but requires four to six treatments); improves moderate sun damage.	Too new to know, but so far results have been promising; yearly maintenance treatment often recommended.	(3) Even with strong numbing cream, "can feel like ice pellets stinging your face," says Dover. Some doctors use light anesthesia.	Three to five days of swelling and redness; skin may be pink for up to a week.	\$1,500.
Plasma (Portrait Plasma is currently the only brand)	Heat energy stimulates collagen production beneath skin surface (without removing epidermis); healing generates collagen to smooth lines.	Too new to know, but so far patients are maintaining results a year and a half after treatment, says dermatologist Roy Geronemus, MD.	(4) High-energy version more painful than fractional resurfacing; need nerve block and prescription painkiller. Low-energy requires topical anesthetic.	On higher settings, one week of redness, peeling (like a really bad sunburn); on lower ones, three to five days of moderate redness, peeling.	\$3,000 to \$4,000 for one high-energy treatment; \$1,500 to \$2,000 for each low-energy treatment (but you'll need three).
Nonablative Infrared Laser (brands include CoolTouch, Smoothbeam, and Aramis)	Targets collagen in dermis, smoothing skin's surface (very effective on lines around eyes and acne scars); will not improve color.	Most doctors recommend a yearly maintenance treatment, says dermatologist Ranella Hirsch, MD.	(2) After numbing cream or ice is applied, feels like a rubber band softly snapping against your skin, says Hirsch.	Might have slight redness for a day (four to six treatments needed for optimal results).	\$400 per treatment.
FOR COLOR CORRECTION Nonablative Visible Wavelength (Green or Yellow) Laser (like KTP or pulsed-dye)	Emits green or yellow light, which is absorbed by hemoglobin and reduces redness from blood vessels.	After a series of three to six treatments, yearly maintenance treatment often required.	(2) "Rubber band" discomfort.	Skin can be pink for one or two days, minimal bruising possible for five to seven days.	\$100 to \$600 per treatment, depending on extent of redness.
Q-Switched Nonablative Visible Wavelength (Red) Laser (like alexandrite or ruby)	Emits beam of red light, which is absorbed by melanin to reduce brown pigmentation.	After initial two to four treatments, yearly maintenance treatment often required.	(2) "Rubber band" discomfort.	Brown spots get darker and flake off over course of a week, says Dover.	\$250 to \$550 per treatment, depending on size and number of spots.
FOR TIGHTENING Radiofrequency (brands include Thermage and ThermoCool)	Radiofrequency energy heats collagen below skin's surface, causing it to contract so skin tightens over time.	Results are difficult to predict, and some patients don't respond at all.	(3 to 4) Even with light anesthesia or strong numbing creams, can be quite unpleasant ("a lot worse than a bikini wax," says Hirsch).	Can be red for two to four days.	\$1,000 to \$5,000, depending on number of areas treated (usually only one treatment required).
FOR A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING Intense Pulsed Light (also known as photorejuvenation)	Broad-spectrum light wavelengths target redness, mild discoloration, and very mild wrinkling; great for minor sun damage.	Results can be long-lasting with proper sun protection; maintenance treatment usually required once or twice a year.	(1 to 2) Very minimal discomfort.	Skin may be pink for a few hours, a day at most.	\$400 to \$600 per treatment, depending on number of areas to be treated (four to six treatments recommended, four to six weeks apart).
LED (brands include GentleWaves and Omnilux)	Low-energy light emitted from panels stimulates collagen and elastin production; causes slight improvements in texture and tone.	You'll probably need maintenance treatments twice a month (initial series is eight to 12 biweekly sessions).	(0)	None.	\$100 to \$200 per treatment (some doctors offer for free as adjuvant treatment to laser or IPL procedures).